

STEADY ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH TROOPS

Orange Free State Annexed to the Empire.

To Be Henceforth Called The Orange River State

Boers Pray and Fight -- Important Movements Pending--British Near Johannesburg--At Mafeking.

LONDON, May 27.—The War Office has received the following from Lord Roberts:

"VEREENING, Sunday, May 27.—1:15 p. m.—We crossed the Vaal this morning and are now encamped on the north bank. The advance troops, which crossed yesterday, were only just in time to save the coal mines on both this and the other side of the river from being destroyed. Our casualties were four.

"Baden-Powell reports that the railway between Mafeking and Bulwerway has been restored and that supplies are being brought into Mafeking. He says the Canadian artillery joined Colonel Plumer from Beira with incredible rapidity.

"Lieutenant Webber was taken prisoner at Heilbron a few days ago. He went there on telegraph duty. It was not known that our troops had been temporarily withdrawn."

"KROONSTAD, May 27.—General Hamilton has invaded the Transvaal, having crossed at Wonderfontein Drift.

"TAAIBOSCH, Saturday, May 26.—General French crossed the Vaal at Lindegues Drift yesterday, and General Henry, with mounted infantry, today. They pushed forward and nearly succeeded in saving the bridge, only the northernmost span being destroyed. All the refugees agree that the mines will be destroyed.

The Boers are taking up a position at Klip River Drift, having left the Vaal. The commandants have assembled to discuss the advisability of discontinuing the struggle. Meanwhile there is a force of the enemy at Myrton. LONDON, May 28.—2:20 a. m.—When Lord Roberts wrote his first dispatch on Transvaal territory yesterday, shortly before 2 o'clock in the afternoon, he was fifty-one miles from Johannesburg and seventy-seven from Pretoria. His immensely superior forces had passed the Vaal river, their alst great natural obstacle, at three points.

The Vaal forms a curve of eighty miles from Parys on the west to Zand drift on the east. The concave of the current is toward the Free State. Thus Lord Roberts, advancing along the railway, was in a position to strike any part of the crescent by shorter lines than those by which the Boers could re-enforce the threatened points. The Boers retreated almost without a show of defense. General French and General Hamilton apparently did not fire a shot.

Of Lord Roberts' force, eleven men belonging to the Eighth Mounted Infantry were the first to ford the river. They came upon a Boer patrol looting at Viljoen's drift, and a skirmish lasting ten minutes followed. Two hundred Boers tried feebly to hold the Vereeniging Colliery, but they were dislodged. The Boer rear guard is at Myrton, ten miles south of Vereeniging. Their main body is moving toward the Klip river hills that cover the south side of Johannesburg.

While Lord Roberts' 30,000 infantry, 20,000 horse and 150 guns are moving on Johannesburg and Pretoria, through a parched and deserted country, the situation at the Transvaal capital as it was last Friday is thus described by an observer who sent his message by private hand to Lourenzo Marquez yesterday:

"The situation, both from a military and a political point of view, has become very critical. President Kruger yesterday admitted that for the first time matters are very grave. The Boer determination is to trust everything to a last stand on the Gatsrand mountains, to the north of Pochefstroom, where 3,000 Kaffirs are digging trenches. To that point every available man and gun has been sent.

"The whole of the western border of the Transvaal from end to end is defenseless, and General Baden-Powell can march in when he likes. Lord Roberts, on the other hand, will encounter the greatest resistance. The Boer endeavor is to lure the British into appearing to threaten Johannesburg with attack, an excuse thus being given them for the destruction of property. The Transvaal Government will not dare destroy the mines and property without an excuse. Much dynamite has been sent down the line and 160,000 cases lie ready at Zuurfontein, near Johannesburg.

General Louis Botha and General Lucas Meyer have pleaded for the preservation of property. Both are large landed proprietors and fear confiscation, but they have not received satisfactory replies from President Kruger.

"Meanwhile many French and German adventurers have come forward with schemes and inventions for blowing up the British troops. Some of these have received a tacit permission to experiment. One German invention is for use on a railway, where it lies perfectly concealed until the weight of a passing train explodes the charge.

"General Lucas Meyer says surrender would be at once proposed by the Boers, but everybody fears the ignominy of being the one to make the proposition. He declares that he is assured that his men will not stand. President Steyn and Mr. Reitz, the Transvaal State Secretary, are strongly opposed to peace, but Kruger is not so much against it."

NEAR JOHANNESBURG.

LONDON, May 28 (midnight).—The War Office just before midnight published the following dispatch from Lord Roberts:

"KLIP RIVER (Transvaal), May 28, 5:25 p. m.—We marched twenty miles to-day and are now eighteen miles from Johannesburg. The enemy had prepared several positions where they intended to oppose us; but they abandoned one after the other as we neared them. We pressed them so hard that they had only just time to get their five guns into train and to leave as soon as some of the Australian Infantry dashed into it.

"French's and Ian Hamilton's forces are apparently engaged with the enemy about ten miles to our left, as firing has been heard since noon.

"H. J. Whigham has just returned to Lourenzo Marquez from Pretoria, where he went disguised. He writes that Kruger has all the arrangements made for flight, presumably to Holland. A special train, provisioned, is always ready with steam up. The train waits near Pretoria.

"The farmers near our line of advance are surrendering with their arms and horses.

"Rundie occupied Senekel on May 24th. No report of what took place has reached me yet."

LATEST FROM ROBERTS.

LONDON, May 29, 2 p. m.—The tenor of Lord Roberts' dispatch of last night and the news from Pretoria this morning lead the authorities here to expect further important news from the British Commander in Chief, stated, they hope, from Johannesburg. The remarkable rapidity of Lord Roberts' movements and the unwonted mobility of the whole British army under him have upset the calculations of the home observers as much as they appear to have disconcerted and demoralized Lord Roberts' Federal opponents. Possibly even now he is at the gates of Johannesburg, and it is believed ten days hence or less he ought to be demanding admittance to the Transvaal capital itself. If the Federals ever really intended to stagger humanity by blowing up the gold reef city and the mines, which is doubtful, Lord Roberts may yet be too quick for them, and arrive before they have time to do any wrecking. The majority of the burghers will undoubtedly be glad of an excuse for saving the mines, and they may find the excuse in Lord Roberts' skill in hustling them out of one position after another.

The effectiveness of the British invasion of the Transvaal is further emphasized by the news from Pretoria of the occupation of Zeerust and the advance on Lichtenburg. Apparently the British dragnet will be drawn through the Transvaal as it was in a similar manner hauled through the Free State.

The fighting at the Klip river Sunday, reported from Pretoria, was presumably done by Generals French and Hamilton in forcing their way round to the northward of Johannesburg.

The Orange Free State was annexed to the British Empire May 28, according to Capt Town's advice, but Lord Roberts seems to have given his army the first intimation of this on the previous day.

THE BOERS FLED.

KLIP RIVER, Monday, May 28.—The Boers after preparing a good position, fled early. The train bearing their last detachment, was nearly captured by Pilkington's West Australians. Prisoners taken state that there was no intention of blowing up the mines, declaring that the threat was made simply with the intention of frightening away the burghers. The British advance force is now within fifteen miles of Johannesburg.

FREE STATE ANNEXED.

CAPE TOWN, May 28.—The Free State was formally annexed today. CAPE TOWN, Monday, May 28.—Lord Roberts yesterday announced to his troops the annexation of the Free State which hereafter will be called The Orange River State.

FIGHTING AND PRAYER.

PRETORIA, May 28.—The British occupied Zeerust this morning and a large force is marching on to Lichtenburg. An official bulletin states that the British crossed the Vaal river Saturday. General Lemmer had a severe fight at Klip river. Five of the burghers were wounded and two were captured. The British were 5000 strong. By an order recently issued, the President decreed that May 27 and the two following days be observed by the whole country as days of prayer, humiliation and the confession of sins and that petitions should be offered for relief from oppression.

Fighting took place at Vanwytrust, fifteen miles south of Johannesburg, with a large force of British which broke through from Klip river. NEWCASTLE, Natal, May 29.—The British guns at Ingogo have been heavily bombarding the Boer's positions since daylight. The Boer guns have replied intermittently.

ERS ON THE OUTLOOK.

NEW YORK, May 23.—A Sun cable from Pretoria, May 20th, via Lourenzo Marquez, May 22, 9 p. m., says: "In an interview today President Kruger said that unconditional surrender was out of the question. The Transvaal, he declared, would fight on until most of its burghers were killed. 'But,' he added, 'There is plenty of life left in them yet.'"

Rev. Mr. Bossman, who is by far the most influential clergyman of the Transvaal burghers' church, and who is known to be an opponent of the Kruger government, and who was a bosom friend of the late General Joubert, was interviewed today on the prospects and the probable outcome of the war. He said:

"The two republics may be crushed by the overwhelming forces of the British, but the national spirit of the Afrikaners will never be exterminated. They will, just so certain as time rolls on, rule South Africa, even if it must be under a foreign flag."

States Attorney Smuts declared that the Transvaal government would be obliged to fight on to the bitter end. Recent utterances of British politicians, Smuts said, indicated that no mercy would be shown to the two republics, which were now aware of what their ultimate fate would be. The war, Smuts declared, would not be concluded for a long time yet. He regretted that Johannesburg should be compelled to suffer, but the government had no choice in the matter. The pressure was too great.

SCENES AT MAFEKING.

MAFEKING, May 18, via Kimberley, May 21.—The British relieving force occupied this town at 9 o'clock. The garrison immediately moved out with twelve-pounders and pom-poms and attacked McMullin's laager. The Boers resisted weakly for a half hour and then fled in disorder, leaving their tents, wagons and implements. The British then occupied all the Boer positions.

Colonel Baden-Powell gave the garrison an opportunity to revenge themselves, using the relief force as a reserve and as supports. Men and women swarmed to the house-tops, and Lady Sarah Wilson on a bicycle accompanied the troops as far as the Boer lines.

The town guard formed up in the market square for the march past the relief force. There was immense enthusiasm over the fact that the relief of the place was accomplished by colonials.

ADVISED TO SURRENDER.

CAPE TOWN May 23.—It is reported here that President Kruger has received a communication from Abraham Fischer, one of the Boer delegates now in the United States, advising him to surrender on the best terms obtainable from Lord Roberts. It is also understood that when Lord Roberts crosses the Vaal river he will issue a proclamation announcing that if the burghers return to their farmsteads their property and stock will be respected.

TRANSVAAL NOTES.

The Minor News of the Coast Files Itemized.

Mafeking took its relief very coolly.

Boer envoys in America were well received.

It is reported that Kruger looks worn and miserable.

There is a great exodus from the Transvaal via Delagoa Bay.

On May 25th Buller's army was facing a strong Boer force at Laing's Nek.

May 25, Cecil Rhodes was at Beira, Portugues-East Africa, still planning.

South African war books continue to be turned out in London at an alarming rate.

May 25, all the burghers in the Harri-smith-Verde district have returned to their farms.

May 25, Roberts' force crossed the Vaal river near Parys. Censors are concealing their tactics.

President Kruger is reported to have transferred his property to personal belongings.

Twenty-seven Free State and Transvaal locomotives were captured by British troops north of Vaal river.

On May 25th the Transvaal burghers to notify him whether they want to continue the fight or sue for peace.

On May 25th Earl de la Warr, while wounded, escaped from the battlefield where Bethune's squadron was captured.

May 25th a plot was disclosed at Pretoria to depose Kruger and surrender the Transvaal to Roberts at an early date.

May 25, the Transvaal Specie Bank has suspended payments.

Victorians who Boer sympathizers had left San Francisco for the former place, double guards have been placed upon the docks and around the forts.

May 25, Britons in New York celebrate the recent successes of the British arms.

The great National Bazaar in aid of the war sufferers was opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in London.

May 25, Roberts' advance was checked by the Rhinoster river, which was not fordable.

Burghers are reported to be voting on the question of surrender.

Boers are rapidly transferring goods from Pretoria.

May 25, State Secretary Reitz of the Transvaal Republic is reported to have fled from Pretoria to Lourenzo Marquez with bar gold to the value of \$705,000.

Boers admit advance guard at Heilbron has been forced to retire.

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JAPAN AND RUSSIA.

They are Very Near a Crisis Over Korean Affairs.

SHANGHAI, May 21.—A dispatch received here from Korea says Russian troops now occupy Wansampho and will prevent the passage of all comers over the territory in Korea claimed by Russia.

NEW YORK, May 25.—A special to the Sun from Washington says: In view of the reports that Japan is preparing for possible conflict with Russia a bit of news that has been received here is regarded as important. It is to the effect that live torpedoes are being placed in all the Japanese harbors. This is a measure adopted by nations only when war is imminent or hostilities are in progress. The only explanation offered for Japan's action here is that the Japanese expect that they will soon have a conflict on their hands.

VICTORIA, B. C., May 25.—The steamer Victoria, which arrived this morning from the Orient, brings news that following on the recent naval maneuvers of Japan, which many regarded as a demonstration, military maneuvers are to be held on a large scale by the Japanese.

Discussing the recent maneuvers and the contemplated military gathering of Japanese troops the Kobe Chronicle says: The Japanese War Office undoubtedly regarded the recent naval operations to some extent as a demonstration and an indication that the renewed activity of Russia in Korea was disapproved and could and would be resisted by force if Japanese interests were in any way threatened.

They are to be followed by military maneuvers, also on a scale unprecedented in Japan, and also having the very good excuse of being held with a view to test the efficiency of the new brigades and divisions organized within the last few years. Nevertheless, we do not think the Japanese Government is anxious to move or anxious to find a pretext for any aggressive action.

Hawaii Imports.

The imports into Hawaii for the first three months of 1900 have exceeded anything heretofore experienced in the history of the islands. The imports for the three months have been \$5,146,922.55, as against \$3,889,923.99 for the first three months of 1899.

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BOXERS ON WAR PATH

A State of Civil War in China.

ADVANCING ON PEKING

Foreign Powers Assembling Ships at Taku and Russia Preparing to Use Troops.

LONDON, May 25.—A special dispatch from Shanghai says advices from Suzhou, province of Hupeh, report that "Boxers" have destroyed two villages and massacred many converts of the French missionary stations. The general commanding at Shi Nan Fu, it is added, sent a regiment to the scene of the disturbances. The soldiers were ambushed by the malcontents and lost twenty-six men killed. Reinforcements have been dispatched from Ichang.

Movements of Boxers.

PEKING, May 28.—The diplomatic corps is now in session considering the situation caused by the Boxers. The foreign guards will certainly be brought here. The position of affairs is alarming. Railway communication with Tien-tsin is interrupted.

TIENTSIN, May 28.—The Boxers burned the Luino station, on the Luanan Railway, twenty miles from Peking, last night. They also wrecked the track, destroyed a number of cars and murdered several Chinese employees. The Boxers are marching on toward Peking.

It is reported that while retreating several Belgian engineers and their families were cut off at Chang Hsin Tien, ten kilometers from Peking. They are now defending themselves on a hill. No Peking trains are running. The Boxers are now burning Feng Tai. It is reported that the United States engineers are in doubt. Several missionaries have been cut off at Pao Ting Fu.

SHANGHAI, May 28.—The troubles arising from the defeat of the Government troops by the Boxers have extended to Tientsin, where work on the railway is almost completely stopped. Five hundred refugees have sought the protection of the French Cathedral at Peking.

America's Course.

NEW YORK, May 25.—A special to the Sun from Washington says: On the basis of recent telegraphic reports from Mr. Conger, United States Minister at Peking, the State Department has determined to follow the course of the European nations in bringing all its moral influence to bear on the Chinese Government to the end that strong measures may be adopted for the suppression of the Boxers. Congress has recently passed a resolution authorizing the United States to send a Christian missionary organization to the province in which Peking is situated and had massacred a number of native Catholics at a recent date. The department has instructed Conger to notify the Tsung-li Yamen that the Government expects it to take measures promptly to suppress the operations of the society and to make good its promises of furnishing protection to Americans and their interests. Conger will act in this matter independent of the other foreign representatives at Peking. The United States Government in its instructions to him having followed its uniform rule in that regard.

The "Boxers," originally a gymnastic association, is now the most powerful political organization in China. It unquestionably gains much of its strength from the belief that the Empress Dowager sympathizes with its purposes. It is opposed to the reform movement and to Christian missionaries. So far there have not been any outrages on foreign residents, but the native Christian converts have suffered severely, women and children not being exempt from the murderous assaults of the fanatics. The future course of this Government has not